

A Note on the Buddhist Golden Book exhibited by the President, the Honourable Sir Charles Elliott, K. C. I. E. By ÇARAT CANDRA DĀS, C. I. E.

(Read January, 1894.)

In February last the President exhibited a Manuscript called the Buddhist Golden Book containing the *Kamma-vācā* written on thick gilt lacquer leaves which he had brought from Cox's Bazār, Chittagong. On that occasion Dr. Hoernle gave an account of its contents based on a Latin translation of the *Kamma-vācā*, published by Spiegel in 1841. As both the text and translation of the *Kamma-vācās* had been published by Dickson in 1881 and by Dr. Frankfurter in 1883, and lastly by Mr. Herbert Baynes in the *Journal* of the Royal Asiatic Society, the Golden Book which possessed such an attractive and glittering appearance, seemed to be of little value. In page 53, of the *Journal* of the Royal Asiatic Society for January 1892, Mr. Herbert Baynes wrote as follows:—

“Having recently received from Mandalay through the kindness of an uncle, several interesting and important Buddhist MSS. in Pali, Burmese and Shan, I venture to lay before the Society a collection of *Kamma-vācās*, some of which, though known to European scholars, have hitherto remained unedited. The first Manuscript is a very handsome copy of the *Kamma-vācam* in Burmese ritual, or ‘tamarind-seed’ letters, printed with a thick black resinous gum on 16 leaves of royal discarded *pasohs*, each leaf containing 6 lines each side.”

This announcement and the translations of the different editions of the text, including that made by Mr. Clough in 1834, impressed me with the importance of the subject. It seemed to me unlikely that a book which was held in unlimited veneration by the entire Buddhist clergy of Burma, Siam, and Ceylon could be an object only of passing notice to the literary world. Shortly after the meeting, Sir Charles Elliott handed over to me the Manuscript for further examination of its contents. In obedience to his wish I have made minute inquiries regarding the contents of the *Kamma-vācās* and language, and the character used in the Manuscript. I am glad to be able to say that

the work when published with its commentary, will be of the highest value to all who inquire into the history of the art of writing and the study of religion, and particularly to the student of Buddhism.

No ancient work either in Sanskrit or Pāli written in the form of *Sūtra* (aphorisms) can be of any value when published without its commentary. As all the editions of the *Kamma-vācā* that have come to my notice are without their commentaries, it is no wonder that little importance should be attached to them. I have been informed that there are in a certain Buddhist library at Colombo, two commentaries on the *Kamma-vācās*, one of which is very elaborate and the other brief. If we obtain a copy of these two, it will be easy to edit the Manuscript before us. No work on Buddhism that has yet been issued by the Asiatic Society of Bengal, can have higher claims to literary and historical, as well as sacerdotal importance, than this book of the rules for admission into the holy order of the Buddhist monks, as prescribed by the founder of Buddhism himself. The *Kamma-vācā* is in fact the basis of Buddhist monkhood, and contains the entire history of the order from its foundation by the Buddha to its maturity during the course of his ministry, which extended over forty-five years.

This Manuscript is written in a missing form of the ancient *Pāli* character. It resembles what is called the square *Pāli*, but differs from the latter just as the *Dēvanāgarī* differs from the Bengali, or the Russian from the Roman character. The Burmese call it the 'tamarind-seed character' on account of the resemblance of the lines forming the letters to tamarind-seeds. Whether this was the earliest sacred character of the Buddhists of India, or the square *Pāli*; and in which of these the early *Pāli Gāthas* were written, are points which require careful examination. The *Pāli* books of Ceylon are written in Singhalese, those of Siam and Cambodia in Cambodian, and those of Burma in Burmese, with the exception of the *Kamma-vācās* which are invariably to be found in the so-called tamarind-seed character.

The *Kamma-vācās*, in the shape they are embodied in the Golden Book, are not to be found in any Buddhist country except Burma. The Burmese who obtained their religion directly from India got the golden book from Magadha—the central and the earliest seat of Buddhism. It is prized by the Burmese for its writing, though many among them can hardly read the character used in it. The learned priests of Burma believe that the writing of the golden book is, in fact, the last vestige of the ancient *Pāli* character in which the sacred books of the Buddhists were written in very early times. It is for these reasons that the golden book is more worshipped than read by the Burmese people. In Siam the priests read the *Kamma-vācās* from the *Vinaya* text

and at the time of ritualistic service recite from memory in the manner of the Ceylonese Buddhists. The Siamese got Buddhism from Cambodia where it was introduced from Ceylon. Their sacred *Pāli* books are written in the Cambodian character which is a modification of the square *Pāli*. The Golden Book is not to be found in Siam, Cambodia or Ceylon. Dr. Frankfurter, the author of the *Pāli* grammar, has published a table of the various characters in which the sacred *Pāli* books are written. In his list no mention is made or specimen given of the character of the Golden Book. Mr. Herbert Baynes the latest writer on the *Kamma-vācā* has not given any description of the tamarind-seed character in which the Burmese manuscript on ritual is written. In the subjoined plate (Plate I) I have arranged the three characters, *viz.*—the characters of the Aṣṭka inscriptions; the ancient *Pāli* obtained from Sir Charles Elliott's manuscript, the Golden Book; and the square *Pāli* character as given by Dr. Frankfurter in his *Pāli* Grammar. Comparing the character of the Golden Book with the first and the last, I find it bears a closer resemblance to the Aṣṭka character than to the square *Pāli* which has hitherto been considered to be the character in which the early Buddhist books were written. Moreover, the entire absence of the vowel long \bar{i} , either as a letter or a vowel sign in the Golden Book, shews that its characters belong to an earlier stage than the square *Pāli*, in which the long \bar{i} is a prominent feature. The square *Pāli* is in fact an ornamental form derived from the ancient *Pāli* character of the Golden Book brought by Sir Charles Elliott. The long \bar{i} exists in the Burmese, Cambodian and Ceylonese characters which owe their origin to the square *Pāli*. There is one more peculiarity in the Golden Book which deserves notice. The letter which is absent in the Aṣṭka character, is to be found in the Golden Book, from which circumstance I may conclude that the Aṣṭka character was older than the character of the Golden Book.

The name *Pāli*, according to the Southern Buddhists, has two significations; first, the sacred books and treatises which emanated from the Buddha and were delivered to the world by his disciples like the Christian Gospels. These were arranged in serial order and were called *Pāli*. In this sense the name *Pāli* signifies only the books or series of treatises, and not the language or character to which it is now ordinarily applied.

Secondly, the name *Pāli* signifies anything that is formed in rows, like the lines of birds flying in the air. This meaning is significant on account of its agreeing with the rows of letters as well as the lines of writing in a book. It is therefore probable, if we are to believe the account of the Buddhists, that the earliest name that was given to the second stage of the written character of India was *Pāli*. According to them, the classical or ancient *Māgadhi*, known as the language of the *Pāli*, *i.e.*, of

the sacred books, was the *Mūla Bhāṣā* of India, in short the basis of Sanskrit. The ancient *Māgadhī* refined was Sanskrit, and the later *Māgadhī* corrupted became the Prākṛit. Prākṛit continued to be the language of Magadha till the time of the Pāla dynasty, when the revival of the study of Sanskrit in Bengal, first at Gauḍa and subsequently on the banks of the Bhāgīrathī, formed the Bengali language, which is indeed a mixture of Sanskrit and Prākṛit. I here annex a short introduction to the *Kamma-vācā* which I have compiled from the Vinaya Text published in the series of *Sacred Books of the East*, and from the Manuscript, which I have deciphered with the help of Mr. Dharmarāj Barua.

INTRODUCTION TO THE KAMMA-VĀCĀ.¹

The Origin of the Buddhist Church.

Çākya Muni dwelt at Uruvēlā, on the bank of the river Nairañjana (Phālgū) at the foot of the *Bōdhi* tree (tree of wisdom), just after he had become Buddha (gained supreme intelligence.) Having sat uninterruptedly for seven days at the foot of the *Bōdhi* tree, he enjoyed the bliss of *nirvāṇa* (emancipation from misery and sorrows). Then he arose from that state of meditation and moved to the foot of the *Ajapāla* (banyan tree²) and enjoyed the bliss of emancipation for seven days. From there he moved to the foot of a *Mucalinda* tree (*Barringtonia Acutangula*), where he meditated for seven days, enjoying the same bliss. He then moved to the foot of the tree called *Rajāyatana*. At this time two merchants, called Tapussa and Bhallika, came travelling on the road from Orissa to that place. They took rice-cakes and lumps of honey, and went to the place where the Blessed One was. Having approached him, they reverentially addressed him: “May the Blessed One accept from us these rice-cakes and lumps of honey!” The Buddha received the offerings in four stone bowls that lay near him and ate from them. As soon as he had finished eating, the two merchants bowed down in reverence at his feet, and thus addressed him: “We take our refuge, Lord, in the Blessed One and in the *Dharma*; may the Blessed One receive us as his disciples.”³ Afterwards the Blessed One thought, “To whom shall I preach the doctrine first? Who will understand this doctrine easily? The five Bhikkhus (who were formerly my companions) have done many services to me. What if I were to preach the doctrine first to them: where do they dwell now?” So thinking; he saw by the power of his divine, clear vision, that the five Bhikkhus were living at

¹ Mahāvagga I, 1 & ff. Ed.

² *I. e.*, Banyan tree of the goatherds.

³ It may be noted here that these two were the first lay disciples of the Buddha. Even then no *saṅgha* (priesthood) was formed.

Benares, in the deer-park, called R̥ṣipātana. He proceeded to Benares. Now Upaka, a man belonging to the *Ājīvaka* sect (*i.e.*, the sect of naked ascetics) saw the Blessed One travelling on the road, between the Bōdhi tree (Bōdh Gayā¹) and Gayā (city), and addressed him saying: “Your countenance, friend, is serene; your complexion is pure and bright. In whose name, friend, have you retired from the world? Who is your teacher? Whose doctrine do you profess?” To this the Buddha replied: “I have overcome all foes, I am all wise; I am free from stains in every way; I have left everything, and have obtained emancipation by the destruction of desire. Having myself gained knowledge, whom should I call my master? I have no teacher, no one is equal to me; in the world of men and of gods no being is like me. I am the Holy One in this world, I am the highest teacher. I alone am the absolute Sambuddha; I have gained coolness (by the extinction of all passions) and have obtained Nirvāṇa. To found the Kingdom of Truth I go to the City of the Kāçī (Benares). I will beat the drum of the Immortal in the darkness of this world.” Upaka replied: “You profess then, friend, to be the Holy, Absolute Jina, the Victorious One.” Buddha said: “Like me are all Jina who have reached extinction of sensuality, individuality, delusion and ignorance. I have overcome all states of sinfulness, therefore, Upaka am I the Jina, the Victorious.” When he had spoken thus, Upaka replied: “It may be so, friend;” shook his head, took another road and went away.

And the Blessed One, wandering from place to place came to Benares, to the deer-park R̥ṣipātana, to the place where the five Bhikkhus were. When he gradually approached near them, they went forth to meet him; one took his bowl and his robe, another prepared a seat, a third one brought water for the washing of the feet, a foot-stool, and a towel. Thus reverentially received, the Buddha addressed the five Bhikkhus:—“There are two extremes, O Bhikkhus which he who has given up the world ought to avoid. What are these two extremes? A life given to pleasures, devoted to pleasures and lusts; this is degrading, sensual, vulgar, ignoble and profitless: and a life given to mortifications; this is painful, ignoble and profitless. By avoiding these two extremes the Buddha has gained the knowledge of the Middle Path which leads to insight and to wisdom; which conduces to calm, to knowledge, to *Sambōdhi* (true enlightenment), and to *Nirvāṇa*. This is the Middle Path, the Holy Eightfold Path, which consists of Right Belief, Right Aspiration, Right Speech, Right Conduct, Right Means of Livelihood, Right Endeavour, Right Memory, Right Meditation.

¹ I may take this opportunity of pointing out that the correct spelling of this name is Bōdh Gayā, not Buddha Gayā. Ed.

“This is the Noble Truth of Suffering. ¹ Birth is suffering; ² decay is suffering; ³ illness is suffering; ⁴ death is suffering. ⁵ Presence of objects we hate, is suffering; Separations from objects we love, is suffering; not to obtain what we desire, is suffering. Briefly, the fivefold clinging to existence is suffering.”

“This is the Noble Truth of the Cause of Suffering: Thirst, that leads to re-birth, accompanied by pleasure and lust, finding its delight here and there.

“This is the Noble Truth of Cessation of Suffering: it ceases with the complete cessation of this thirst—a cessation which consists in the absence of every passion,—with the abandoning of this thirst, with the doing away with it, with the destruction of desire.

“As long as I did not possess this true knowledge and insight into the four Noble Truths, so long I knew that I had not yet obtained the highest absolute *Sambōdhi*. But since I possessed with perfect purity this true knowledge, then I knew that I had obtained the highest universal *Sambōdhi* in the world of men and gods. The emancipation of my mind cannot be lost: this is my last birth: hence I shall not be born again.”

*Origin of the Great Order of Bhikkhus.*¹

The five Bhikkhus were delighted, and they rejoiced at the words of the Blessed One. And when this exposition was propounded, the Venerable Kaundinya obtained the pure and spotless Eye of the Truth:—Whatsoever is subject to the condition of origination, is subject also to the condition of cessation. And the Blessed One pronounced this solemn utterance: “Truly, Kaundinya has perceived it (*Aññāsi*).” Hence the Venerable Kaundinya received the name of *Aññātakōṇḍiṇṇa* (*Ājñāta-kaundinya*, Kaundinya who has perceived the doctrine). He then spoke to the Blessed One: “Lord, let me receive from Thee the *Pravrajyā* and *Upasampadā* ordinations.” “Come, O Bhikkhus,” said the Blessed One, “well taught is the doctrine: lead a holy life for the sake of the complete extinction of suffering.” Thus the Venerable Kaundinya received the *Upasampadā* ordination.

Thus originated the custom of initiating one who has taken the *Pravrajyā* vow of renunciation into the Order of the Perfected, called *Upasampadā*. The Blessed One was the first to renounce the world and to become perfected in Supreme Knowledge, *i. e.*, *Upasampanna*.

Then the four remaining *Bhikkhus*, having mastered the Truth, spoke to the Blessed One; “Lord, let us receive the *Pravrajyā* and *Upasampadā* ordinations from the Blessed One.” “Come, O Bhikkhus,” said the Blessed One, “well taught is the doctrine: lead a holy life for

¹ Mahāvagga I, 6, 29. Ed.

the sake of the complete extinction of suffering.” Thus these venerable persons became ordained into the “Order of the Perfected,” which henceforth, with the Buddha at its head, became known as the “*Samgha*,” the Holy Communion. And for the first time the Buddhist triad, *i. e.*, *Buddha*, *Dharma*, and *Samgha*, the Supreme Perfected Being, his doctrine and priesthood was formed. Before this there existed the two, *i. e.*, the Buddha and his doctrine (*Dharma*). There was no Buddhist priesthood till then.

When the Blessed One had converted the five Bhikkhus into his doctrine, Yasa, the noble youth, the son of a rich merchant of Benares, being satiated with the pleasures of the world, happened to visit him in the grove of R̥ṣipātana. Shortly after Yasa’s arrival, his father came in search of him. The Blessed One convinced both the father and the son of the excellence of his doctrine. And Yasa, the noble youth, soon after the Çrēṣṭhin (merchant) was gone, said to the Buddha: “Lord, let me receive the *Pravrajyā* and *Upasampadā* ordinations.” Said the Buddha, “Well taught is the doctrine: lead a holy life for the sake of the complete extinction of suffering.” Yasa was accordingly admitted into the Holy Order of Bhikkhus. In the evening of that day Buddha visited the house of the Çrēṣṭhin, when Yasa’s former wife and mother came, and reverentially saluting, sat down near him to hear the *Dharma*. The Blessed One talked about the merits obtained by alms-giving. The ladies, having seen the Truth, said: “We take our refuge, Lord, in Thee and in the *Dharma* and in the fraternity of Bhikkhus. May the Blessed One receive us from this day forth, while our life lasts, as disciples who have taken their refuge in Him.” These were the first females in the world who became lay disciples by the formula of taking refuge in the holy triad. Thereafter fifty-four lay persons, friends of the venerable Yasa, belonging to the highest families in the country, were admitted into the Holy Order, in consequence of which the number of *Arahats* then rose to sixty-one. At this stage the Blessed One said to the Bhikkhus—

*Origin of the Buddhist Propaganda.*¹

“Go ye now, O Bhikkhus, and wander, for the gain of the many, for the welfare of the many, out of compassion for the world; for the good, for the gain, and for the welfare of the gods and men. Let not two of you go the same way. Preach the doctrine which is glorious in the beginning, glorious in the middle, glorious at the end, in the spirit and in the letter; proclaim a consummate, perfect and pure life of holiness. There are beings whose mental eyes are covered by scarcely any dust; but if the doctrine is not preached to them, they cannot attain salvation.

¹ Mahāvagga, I, 11, 1. Ed.

They will understand the doctrine. And I will go, also, to Uruvēlā, to Sēnānigama, in order to preach the doctrine.”

While charging them with this commission, the Buddha said: “I grant you, O Bhikkhus, this permission: Confer henceforth in the different regions, and in the different countries the *Pravrajyā* and *Upasāmpadā* ordinations yourself on those who desire to receive them. And you ought to confer the *Pravrajyā* and *Upasāmpadā* ordinations in this way:—Let him who desires to receive the ordination, first have his hair and beard cut off; let him put on yellow robes, adjust his upper robe so as to cover one shoulder, salute the feet of the Bhikkhus with his head, and sit down squatting; then let him raise his joined hands, and tell him to say: ‘I take my refuge in the Buddha; I take my refuge in the *Dharma*; I take my refuge in the *Samgha*.’ In three times repeating this declaration of taking refuge in the holy triad consist the *Pravrajyā* and *Upasāmpadā* ordinations.”

Thereafter the Buddha leaving Benares proceeded to Uruvēlā. Here while residing in a certain grove, he admitted thirty young men into the order of Bhikkhus. He then went to the hermitage of the three leaders of the *Jaṭila* sect of *Sannyāsīs* who wore matted hair, and converted them, with their followers, about 1,000 in number, to his doctrine, and admitted them into the Holy Order. From Uruvēlā the Buddha proceeded to Rājagṛha, the capital of Magadha, and there took his residence in *Latṭhivana*. The conversion of Uruvēlā Kaṣyapa, the most famous leader of the *Jaṭila* ascetics spread the fame of the Buddha and his doctrine far and wide. Being informed of this marvellous success, Bimbisāra, the King of Magadha, with twelve myriads of Magadha Brāhmins and householders went to the place where the Blessed One was. They thought within themselves: “How now is this? Has the great Çramaṇa (the Buddha) placed himself under the spiritual direction of Uruvēlā Kaṣyapa, or has Uruvēlā Kaṣyapa placed himself under the great Çramaṇa?”

Hearing from the lips of Uruvēlā Kaṣyapa the real story of his conversion, King Bimbisāra with ten thousand men imbibed faith in the doctrine of the Buddha and became his lay disciples. The King now reverently offered the Buddha his pleasure-grove called *Vēṇuvana* for his residence. The Blessed One accepted the grove (*Ārāma*) and took his residence there. Here he admitted into the Holy Order two friends, named *Kōlita* and *Upatiṣya*. This auspicious pair of his disciples, who also bore respectively the names of *Maudgalyāyana* and *Çāriputra* played an important part throughout the whole course of the Buddha’s ministry. Soon after their conversion two hundred and fifty disciples of *Samjaya*, the Brāhmin *Parivrājaka*, entered the holy order. Thereafter many distinguished young Magadha noblemen led a religious life under the

Maudgalyāyana
Çāriputra

direction of the Buddha. At this people were annoyed, murmured, and became angry, saying, “The Çramaṇa Gautama causes fathers to beget no sons, wives to become widows, and families to be extinct. Now he has ordained one thousand *Jaṭiṇa Sannyāsīs* (ascetics), and he has ordained these two hundred and fifty *Parivrājaka* (wandering ascetics) who were the followers of Saṃjaya.” And, moreover, when they saw the Bhikkhus, they reviled them.

The reason was evident. The Bhikkhus went on their rounds for alms, wearing their under and upper garments improperly. While people were eating, they held out their alms-bowl in which were held leavings of food. They asked for soup and boiled rice themselves and ate it; in the dining hall they made a great and loud noise. The Buddha now perceived that the order of Bhikkhus had already grown too large, and that discipline was necessary for its regulation. He addressed the Bhikkhus, saying:—“I prescribe, O Bhikkhus, that young Bhikkhus choose a preceptor (*Upādhyāya*). The *Upādhyāya* ought to consider the pupil as a son, and the pupil ought to consider the *Upādhyāya* as a father. Thus these two, with united confidence and communion of life, will progress, advance, and reach a high stage in this doctrine and discipline.”

*The origin of the Kamma-vācās.*¹

At that time a certain Brāhmaṇa came to the Bhikkhus and asked them for the *pravrajyā* ordination. The Bhikkhus were not willing to ordain him. He became lean and emaciated from disappointment and the Blessed One saw him, and said:—“Now, O Bhikkhus, who remembers anything about this Brāhmaṇa?” The Venerable Çāriputra said to the Blessed One: “This Brāhmaṇa, Lord, one day, when I went through Rājagṛha for alms, ordered a spoonful of food to be given to me; this is what I remember of him, Lord.” The Buddha said, “Good, good, Çāriputtra; therefore confer you the *pravrajyā* and *upasampadā* ordinations on that Brāhmaṇa.”

“Lord, how shall I confer the *pravrajyā* and *upasampadā* ordinations on this Brāhmaṇa?” The Blessed One said, “I abolish from this day the *upasampadā* ordination by the threefold declaration of taking refuge, which I had formerly prescribed. I now prescribe that you confer the *upasampadā* ordination by a formal act of the Order in which the announcement is followed by three questions²:—Let a

¹ Mahāvagga, I, 28, Ed.

² The forms for bringing a formal motion before the Order is the following: The mover first announces to the assembled Bhikkhus what resolution he is going to propose; this announcement is called *Jñapti*. After the *Jñapti* follows the question put to the Bhikkhus present, if they approve the resolution. This question is put three times.

learned, competent *Bhikkhu* proclaim the following *jñapti* (announcement) before the *Samgha* (Chapter).

‘Let the *Samgha*, Reverend Sirs, hear me. This person *N. N.*, desires to receive the *upasampadā* ordination from the Venerable *N. N.*, as his *Upādhyāya*, (preceptor). If the *Samgha* is ready, let the *Samgha* confer on *N. N.*, the *upasampadā* ordination. Let any one of the venerable brethren who is in favour of the ordination of *N. N.*, be silent, and any one who is not in favour of it, speak.’ This announcement should be recited thrice. Then let him say:—

‘*N. N.*, has received the *Upasampadā* ordination from the *Samgha* with *N. N.* as *Upādhyāya*. The *Samgha* is in favour of it, therefore it is silent. Thus I understand.’ ”

KAMMA-VĀCĀ.

PAṬHAMAPARICCHĒDŌ.

UPASAMPADA-KAMMAVĀCĀ.

NAMŌ TASSA BHAGAVATŌ ARAHATŌ SAMMĀSAMBUDDHASSA.¹

Paṭhamam upajjham gāhāpētabbō. Upajjham gāhāpētvā pattacīvaram ācikkhitabbam.

‘Ayaṃ tē pattō?’ ‘Āma bhantē.’

‘Ayaṃ saṃghāṭi?’ ‘Āma bhantē.’

‘Ayaṃ uttarāsaṃgō?’ ‘Āma bhantē.’

‘Ayaṃ antaravāsakō?’ ‘Āma bhantē.’

‘Gaccha anumhi, ōkāse tiṭṭhāhi.’

‘Suṇātu mē bhantē saṃghō. Nāgō āyasmato *Tissassa* upasampadāpēkkhō. Yadi saṃghassa pattakallam, aham Nāgam anusāsēyyam.

‘Suṇāsi Nāga, ayaṃ tē saccakālō bhūtakālō. Yam jātam, tam saṃghamajjhē puccham tē. Santam atthīti vattabbam. Asantam natthīti vattabbam. Mā khō vitthāsi. Mā khō akusalōsi.

‘Ēvam tam pucchissanti.

‘Santi tē ēvamrūpā ābādhā?’

‘Kutṭham?’ ‘Natthi bhantē.’

‘Gaṇḍō?’ ‘Natthi bhantē.’

‘Kilāsō?’ ‘Natthi bhantē.’

‘Sōsō?’ ‘Natthi bhantē.’

‘Apamārō?’ ‘Natthi bhantē.’

‘Manussōsi?’ ‘Āma bhantē.’

‘Purisōsi?’ ‘Āma bhantē.’

‘Bhujissōsi?’ ‘Ama bhantē.’

¹ Cf. *Mahāvagga*, I, 76, 1. Ed.

‘Aṇaṇōsi?’ ‘Ama bhantē.’

‘Nasi rājabhaṭō?’ ‘Āma bhantē.’

‘Anuññātōsi mātāpitūhi?’ ‘Āma bhantē.’

‘Paripuṇṇa-vīsati-vassōsi?’ ‘Āma bhantē.’

‘Paripuṇṇaṃ tē patta-cīvaraṃ?’ ‘Ama bhantē.’

‘Kimnāmōsi?’ ‘Ahaṃ bhantē *Nāgō nāma.*’

‘Kō nāma tē upajjhāyō?’ ‘Upajjhāyō mē bhantē āyasmā *Tissatthērō nāma.*’

‘Suṇātu mē bhantē saṃghō, *Nāgō āyasmato Tissassa upasampadā-pēkkhō. Anusiṭṭhō sō mayā.*

‘Yadi saṃghassa pattakallaṃ, *Nāgō āgacchēyya.*’

Kamma-vācā (Formal acts of Buddhist ritual).

CHAPTER I.

Ritual for the Ordination of Monks.

Reverence to the Blessed One, the Holy One, the Fully Enlightened One.

First (the candidate) should be made to have an *Upādhyāya* (Spiritual tutor).

Having been made to accept an *Upādhyāya*,¹ he should be asked, if he has got his alms-bowl and (religious) robes².

¹ At that time the Bhikkhus conferred the *Upasampadā* ordination on a person that had no *Upādhyāya*. They told this thing to the Blessed One who said: ‘Let no one, O Bhikkhus, who has no *Upādhyāya* receive the *Upasampadā* ordination, (*Mahāvagga*, I, 69).

² The Buddha prescribed the stuff of which the religious robes of the Buddhist monks should consist, while speaking of the four Resources of a *Bhikkhu*: ‘The religious order has the robe made of rags taken from a dust-heap or from a cemetery for its resource. Linen, cotton, silk, woollen garments, coarse cloth, hempen cloth, are extra allowances.’ As to the manner of sewing in patches, the instruction contained in the following discourse will be interesting.

‘Now, on one occasion the Buddha set forth on his journey towards *Dakkhinagiri* (the Southern hills of Bihār). On the way he beheld how the Magadha rice-fields were divided into short pieces, and in rows, and by outside boundaries or ridges, and by cross boundaries. On seeing this Buddha thus spoke to the Venerable Ānanda. ‘Dost thou perceive, how the rice-fields are divided into short pieces, and in rows?’

‘Even so, Lord.’

‘Could you, Ānanda, provide robes of a like kind for the Bhikkhus?’

‘I could, Lord.’

‘Then Ānanda provided robes of a like kind for many Bhikkhus, and addressing the Buddha said, ‘May the Blessed One be pleased to look at the robes which I have provided.’ Buddha was pleased with what he saw, and addressing the Bhikkhus said.

‘Is this your alms-bowl’? ‘Yes, Venerable Sir.’

‘Is this your *Samghāṭī* (wrapper for the body)? ‘Yes, Venerable Sir.’?

‘Is this your *Uttarāsaṅga* (upper robe)’? ‘Yes, Venerable Sir.’

‘Is this your *Antaravāsaka* (under robe)’? ‘Yes, Venerable Sir.’

‘Go to that place and wait (standing).’

‘Let the *Samgha* (Chapter), Reverend Sirs, hear me. This person, Nāga, desires to receive the *Upasampadā* ordination with the Venerable Tiṣya as his *Upādhyāya*. If the *Samgha* is ready, let me instruct Nāga accordingly. Do you hear, Nāga? This is the time for you to speak the truth, and to say that which has been. When I ask you before the Assembly about that which is, you ought, if it is so, to answer: “It is;” if it is not so, you ought to answer: “It is not.” Be not disconcerted, be not perplexed. I shall ask you thus (in the presence of the *Samgha*): ‘Are you afflicted with the following diseases—¹ leprosy, boils, dry leprosy, consumption, and fits?’ ‘No, Venerable Sir.’

‘Are you a man²’? ‘Yes, Venerable Sir.’

‘O Bhikkhus, Ānanda is an able man, he can make the cross seams, and the intermediate cross seams, and the greater circles, and the lesser circles, and the turning in, and the lining of the turning in, and the collar-piece, and the knee piece, and the elbow-piece. And it shall be of torn pieces, roughly sewn together suitable for a *Çramaṇa* (monk), a thing which his enemies cannot court. I enjoin upon you O Bhikkhus, the use of an under robe of torn pieces, and of an upper robe of torn pieces, and of a waist cloth of torn pieces.’”

¹ At that time the five diseases—Leprosy, boils, dry leprosy, consumption and fits prevailed among the people of Magadha. The people who were affected with them went to the physicians Jīvaka and said, ‘Pray, doctor, cure us.’ ‘I have too many duties, Sir, and am too occupied. I have to treat the Magadha King Bimbisāra, and the royal seraglio, and the fraternity of Bhikkhus, with the Buddha at their head. I cannot cure you.’ Now these people thought, ‘Indeed, the precepts which these monks keep and the life they live are commodious; they have good meals and lie down on beds protected from the wind. What if we were to embrace the religious life among them, then the Bhikkhus will nurse us and Jīvaka will cure us.’ Thus these persons went to the Bhikkhus who conferred on them the *Pravrajyā* (Buddhist) ordination. Some of them becoming free from the sickness returned to the world leaving off their monkish life. Now Jīvaka saw them and said ‘Had you not embraced the religious, life, Sirs, among the Bhikkhus?’ ‘Yes, doctor.’ ‘And why have you adopted such a course, Sirs?’ Then they told him the whole matter. And Jīvaka went to the place where the Blessed One was, and representing to him all about the sick men, said. ‘Pray, Lord, let their Reverences not confer the *Pravrajyā* ordination on persons afflicted with the five diseases.’ In consequence of that the Blessed One addressed the Bhikkhus: ‘Let no one, O Bhikkhus, who is affected with the five diseases, receive the *Pravrajyā* ordination.’

² At that time there was a serpent who was ashamed of and conceived aversion for his having been born as a serpent. Now this serpent thought, ‘What am I to

‘Are you a male¹?’ ‘Yes, Venerable Sir.’

‘Are you a free man²?’ ‘Yes, Venerable Sir.’

‘Have you no debts³?’ ‘I have no debts, Venerable Sir.’

do in order to become released from being a serpent, and quickly to obtain human nature?’ Then this serpent gave himself the following answer: ‘These monks of Çākya lead indeed a virtuous, tranquil, holy life; they speak the truth; they keep the precepts of morality, and are endowed with all virtues. If I could obtain the *Pravrajyā* ordination with them, I should be released from being a serpent and quickly obtain human nature.’ Then that serpent, in the shape of a youth, went to the Bhikkhus, and asked them for the *Pravrajyā* ordination; the Bhikkhus conferred on him the ordination. At that time that serpent dwelt together with a certain Bhikkhu in the Jētavana *Vihāra* near its boundary wall. When his companion had gone out of the *Vihāra* for a walk at dawn, the serpent, who thought himself safe from discovery, fell asleep in his natural shape. The whole *Vihāra* was filled with the snake’s body; his winding jutted out of the window. When the Bhikkhu returned to the *Vihāra* he saw the snake’s body and became terrified, and cried out. The Bhikkhus ran up to him and made a noise when they saw the snake’s body. The serpent awoke from that noise and sat down on his seat. The Bhikkhus said to him ‘Who are you.’ ‘I am a serpent, Reverend Sirs.’ ‘And why have you done such a thing?’ Then the serpent told the whole matter to the Bhikkhus. The Bhikkhus told it to the Blessed One.

In consequence of that, and on this occasion, the Blessed One, having ordered the fraternity of Bhikkhus to assemble, said to that serpent: ‘You serpents are not capable of spiritual growth in this doctrine and discipline. However, serpent, go and observe fasts on the fourteenth, fifteenth, and eighth day of each half-month in the name of the Trinity. Thus will you be released from being a serpent and quickly obtain human nature.’ Then the Blessed One said to the Bhikkhus. ‘There are two occasions on which a serpent who has resumed human shape manifests his true nature: When he has sexual intercourse with a female of his species; and when he thinks himself safe from discovery and falls sleep.’

¹ At that time a certain hermaphrodite had received *Pravrajyā* with the Bhikkhus. The hermaphrodite being possessed of the nature of both the sexes committed sexual intercourse with the Bhikkhus and the Bhikkhunī’s.

They told this thing to the Blessed One. ‘Let not a hermaphrodite, O Bhikkhus, receive the ordination.’

² At that time a slave ran away, and was ordained with the Bhikkhus. When his masters saw him, they said: ‘There is our slave; come let us lead him away, back to our house.’ They told this thing to the Blessed one. ‘Let no slave, O Bhikkhus, receive the *Pravrajyā* ordination.’

³ At that time a certain person who was in debt, ran away, and was ordained with the Bhikkhus. When his creditors saw him, they said, ‘There is our debtor; come let us lead him to prison?’ But some people replied: ‘Do not say so, Sirs. A decree has been issued by the Magadha King. No one is to do harm to those who are ordained as the monks of Çākya.’ ‘How can they ordain a debtor?’ They told this to the Blessed One. ‘Let no debtor, O Bhikkhus, receive the *Pravrajyā* ordination.’

‘Are you not in the royal service¹’? ‘I am not, Venerable Sir.’

‘Have your father and mother² given their consent to your entering the *Pravrajyā*’? ‘Yes, Venerable Sir.’

¹ At that time the border provinces of the kingdom of Magadha were agitated. Then the Magadha king, Bimbisāra, gave order to the officers who were at the head of the army: ‘Well now, go and search through the border provinces.’ The officers bore his command saying ‘Yes, your Majesty.’

Many warriors among them thought, ‘We who go to war and find our delight in fighting, do evil and produce great demerit. What shall we do that we may desist from evil doing and may do good?’

Then they thought, ‘The monks of Çākya lead indeed a virtuous, tranquil, holy life; they speak the truth; they keep the precepts of morality, and are endowed with all virtues.’ Thus these warriors went to the Bhikkhus and asked them for the *Pravrajyā* ordination, and were admitted into the Order.

The officers at the head of the army asked the royal soldiers, ‘Why, how is it that the warrior N. N. and N. N. are nowhere to be seen?’ ‘The warrior’s N. N. and N. N., Lords, have embraced religious life among Bhikkhus.’ The officers told this thing to the King, who asked the Officers of Justice; ‘Tell me, my good Sirs, what punishment does he deserve who ordains a person in the royal service?’

‘The *Upādhyāya*, Your Majesty, should be beheaded; to him who recites the *Kamma-vācās*, the tongue should be torn out; to those who form the Chapter, half of their ribs should be broken.’ Then the Magadha King went to the palace where the Blessed One was, and addressing him said: ‘Lord, there are unbelieving Kings who are disinclined to the faith; these might harass the Bhikkhus even on trifling occasions. Pray, Lord, let their Reverences not confer the *Pravrajyā* ordination on persons in royal service.’

Then the Blessed One thus addressed the Bhikkhus: ‘Let no one, O Bhikkhus, who is in the royal service, receive the *Pravrajyā* ordination. He who confers it on such a person is guilty of *Duṣkṛta*, offence.’

² Then the Blessed One, went forth to Kapilavāstu and dwelt in the Çākya country, in the Banyan grove. And in the fore-noon having put on his under-ropes, took his alms-bowl, and with his robes on went to the residence of his father. Having gone there, he sat down on a seat laid out for him. Then the Princess, (Buddha’s former wife) said to young Rāhula, her son, ‘This is your father, Rāhula; go and ask him for your inheritance.’ Then young Rāhula went to the place where the Blessed One was; having approached him he said—‘Father, your shadow is a place of bliss.’ Then the Blessed One rose from his seat and went away, and young Rāhula followed the Blessed One from behind and said. ‘Give me my inheritance, father; give me my inheritance father.’

Then the Blessed One said to the Venerable Çāriputra: ‘Well Çāriputra, confer the *Pravrajyā* ordination on young Rāhula.’ The Venerable Çāriputra conferred the *Pravrajyā* ordination on young Rāhula. Then the Çākya Çuddhōdana (Buddha’s father) went to the place where the Blessed One was; having approached him and having respectfully saluted him, said, ‘Lord I ask one boon of thee.’ The Buddha replied, the perfect ones are above granting boons before they know what they are.

Çuddhōdana said: ‘Lord, it is a proper and unobjectionable demand.’ ‘Speak.’

‘When the Blessed One gave up the world, it was a great pain to me, so it was

‘Are you full twenty years¹ old’? ‘Yes, Venerable Sir.’

‘Are your alms-bowl and your robes² in due state?’ ‘Yes, Venerable Sir.’

‘What is your name’? ‘My name is Nāga, Venerable Sir.’

‘What is your (spiritual) teacher’s name?’ ‘The name of my tutor is Tiṣya, Venerable Sir.’

‘Let the *Samgha* (Chapter), Reverend Sirs, hear me. This person, Nāga, desires to receive the *Upasampadā* (ordination) from the Venerable Tiṣya (as his *Upādhyāya*).

‘If the *Samgha* is ready, let Nāga come here (in the presence of the *Samgha*).’

when Nanda did the same : my pain was excessive when my grandson Rāhula too, did so. The love for a son cuts the heart. Pray, let their reverences not confer the *Pravrajyā* ordination on a son without his father’s and mother’s permission.’ The Blessed One then said to the Chapter. ‘Let no son, O Bhikkhus, receive the *Pravrajyā* ordination without his father’s and mother’s permission.’

¹ There was at Rājagrha a company of seventeen boys, friends of each other. Thinking that they could live a life of ease and without pain, they went to the Bhikkhus and asked them for the *Pravrajyā* ordination. The Bhikkhus admitted them into the holy order.

In the night, at dawn, these boys rose and began to cry, ‘Give us rice, and milk. Give us soft food, give us hard food!’ The Bhikkhus said, ‘Wait, friends, till day time. If there is rice and milk you will drink; if there is food, soft and hard, you shall eat.’ When they were thus spoken to the young Bhikkhus threw their bedding about and made it wet, calling out, ‘Give us rice, milk, and food, &c.’

Then the Blessed One, having arisen in the night, heard the noise which those boys made, and said to Ānanda. ‘Now, what noise of boys is that?’ The Venerable Ānanda told the thing to the Blessed One. ‘It is true, that the Bhikkhus knowingly confer the *Upasampadā* ordination on persons under twenty years of age.’

Then the Blessed One rebuked those Bhikkhus, and said, ‘Let no one, O Bhikkhus, knowingly confer the *Upasampadā* ordination on a person under twenty years of age.’

² At that time the Bhikkhus conferrred *Upasampadā* ordination on persons that had no alms-bowl, or they went out for robes and alms naked, and received alms with their hands. People were annoyed, murmured, and became angry, saying that they behaved shamelessly like the *Tīrthika Sannyāsīs*. The Bhikkhus told this thing to the Blessed One. ‘Let no one, O Bhikkhus, receive the *Upasampadā* ordination without having an alms-bowl or the proper robes.’

